

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MBFR V 00076 030635Z

11

ACTION ACDA-10

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INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0076

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: THE COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT

REF: USNATO 1022

1. WE HAVE FOLLOWED WITH INTEREST THE DISCUSSION ON THE COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT CONTAINED REFTEL. PERHPAS IT MAY BE HELPFUL FOR THE COURSE OF FURTHER DISCUSSION TO BEAR IN MIND WHAT THE CURRENT INTERESTS OF THE AD HOC GROUP IN THIS MATTER ARE: PRIMARILY IN RESPONSE TO EASTERN INTEREST IN FRG REDUCTIONS AND UNDER FRG INFLUENCE, THE ALLIES IN VIENNA HAVE BEEN PLACING INCREASING STRESS ON THE COLLECTIVE NATURE BOTH OF POSSIBLE NO-INCREASE COMMITMENTS BETWEEN THE PHASES AND OF THE COMMON CEILING. AS THE RECORD OF RECENT INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS INDICATE, THE EAST IN TURN HAS BEEN CON-TESTING THIS POINT MORE AND MORE VIGOROUSLY.

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SECRET

PAGE 02 MBFR V 00076 030635Z

2. IN ORDER TO RESPOND MORE EFFECTIVELY, WHAT THE ALLIES NEED AT THIS STAGE OF DISCUSSION IS NOT A FINISHED SOLUTION OF THIS PROBLEM, BUT A COHERENT EXPLANATION OF HOW A COLLECTIVE CEILING WOULD OPERATE AS A PRACTICAL MATTER. THEY NEED PLAUSIBLE ARGUMENTS TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE EAST THAT A COLLECTIVE CEILING IS A WORKABLE DEVICE AND IN THIS WAY TO MAKE CONSTRUCTIVE ARGUMENTS AGAINST EASTERN PRESSURES FOR A NATIONAL CEILING IN ADDITION TO THE CASE THEY HAVE BEEN MAKING THAT NATIONAL CEILINGS WOULD BE DISCRIMINATORY AND WOULD INTERFERE WITH THE INTERNAL OPERATIONS OF NATO. SUCH AN EXPLANATION OBVIOUSLY HAS TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH LONG-TERM ALLIED INTERESTS, BUT NEED NOT BE BASED ON A FINAL ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM.

3. IN DEVELOPING MORE COGENT ARGUMENTATION FOR THE PRACTICALITY OF THE COLLECTIVE CEILING, THE ALLIES SHOULD AT THE SAME TIME AVOID USING ARGUMENTS WHICH WOULD WEAKEN THE CASE FOR A RESIDUAL LIMIT ON SOVIET FORCES IN THE AREA. A CLEAR LIMIT OF THIS KIND APPEARS TO US TO BE MAJOR SECURITY REQUIREMENT OF AN MBFR AGREEMENT.

4. WE WOULD NOT WANT TO CONTEST THE FRG POINT THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO HANDLE THE ISSUE OF POSSIBLE INCREASES IN FRENCH FORCES IN THE FRG IN A NON-CIRCUMVENTION CONTEXT. BUT ALL WOULD PROBABLY AGREE THAT IT IS PREFERABLE TO TRY TO WORK OUT SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS TO SPECIFIC ISSUES WHERE FEASIBLE. IF THIS IS NOT DONE, THE NON-CIRCUMVENTION PROVISION OF AN AGREEMENT WILL PROBABLY BE SURROUNDED BY A FOREST OF UNILATERAL INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENTS FROM BOTH SIDES APPLYING NON-CIRCUMVENTION SPECIFICALLY TO COVER SUCH MATTERS AS HUNGARY, ARMAMENT LIMITATIONS, NATIONAL CEILINGS, AND RESIDUAL MANPOWER LEVELS OF THE USSR. THE NON-CIRCUMVENTION APPROACH IS ON THE ONE HAND A LEGITIMATE WAY OF DEALING WITH PROBLEMS OF THIS KIND, BUT COULD ON THE OTHER HAND MAKE AN AGREEMENT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO IMPLEMENT WITHOUT FRICTION.DEAN

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